

February 14, 2023

Testimony: Direct Care Minimum Staffing Mandate SB00989

Dear Human Services and Aging Committees,

I am testifying on behalf of Water's Edge Center for Health and Rehabilitation opposing the proposed minimum staffing legislation for Connecticut nursing homes. Our facility is in Middletown, CT and is a 150-bed skilled nursing home, providing both short term rehabilitation and long-term care. I have been an Administrator for over 20 years, and I am deeply committed to providing quality and compassionate care for our sick and elderly population.

To mandate an increase direct care minimum staffing level at this time will not work. In the many years of managing nursing homes, I have never experienced such challenging times to fill nursing and certified nursing assistant jobs as we are today. We are continuously promoting and advertising job openings and running job fairs to fill open positions. Despite offering very competitive rates of pay and sign on bonuses we have been unsuccessful at filling many of our more than 20 open positions. Unfortunately, this creates tremendous stress on the existing staff who are working additional shifts, resulting in staff who are experiencing burnout and compounding the problem.

I am in total support of programs that will invest in the long-term care workforce, but right now is clearly not the time to mandate an unfunded minimum staffing legislative mandate. It will not result in helping to create the skilled workforce we need and will only compound the existing staffing problems health care and all businesses are experiencing today. Please don't pass this legislation, we don't have the funding needed and we certainly can't find the staffing to comply with the mandate at this time.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my testimony with you.

Sincerely,

Richard A. DeMio
Administrator
Water's Edge Center for Health & Rehabilitation